SONOMA CLIMATE MOBILIZATION

RESILIENT · EQUITABLE · TRANSFORMATIVE

STRATEGY - ADMIN DRAFT

December 2020

REGIONAL CLIMATE PROTECTION AUTHORITY

Acknowledgements

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SCTA/RCPA Advisory Committees

- SCTA Citizens Advisory Committee, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Planning Advisory Committee, Transit Technical Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Committee
- RCPA Climate Action Advisory Committee

Local Jurisdictions, Agencies, and Special Districts

- Bay Area Air Quality Management District
- Cities of Cloverdale, Cotati, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Sonoma, and Town of Windsor
- County of Sonoma
- Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District
- Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District
- Sonoma Clean Power
- Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District
- Sonoma Resource Conservation District
- Sonoma Water

- Zero Waste Sonoma

Community-based organizations and nonprofits

- 350 Sonoma
- Carbon Cycle Institute
- Citizens Climate Lobby
- Climate Action Petaluma
- Community Alliance with Family Farmers, Sonoma County Chapter
- Daily Acts
- EcoRing
- Friends of the Climate Action Plan
- Healdsburg Climate Action
- Milo Baker Chapter CNPS
- Petaluma Wetlands Alliance
- Resource Performance Partners
- Santa Rosa Junior College Sustainability Committee
- Sierra Club Redwood Chapter
- The Climate Center
- Transition Sonoma Valley
- Sebastopol Climate Action Group
- Sonoma Land Trust
- Sonoma County Transportation and Land Use Coalition
- Sunrise Movement
- Working Group for Emergency Climate Action Now (WECAN)

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- Cities of Cloverdale, Cotati, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Sonoma, and Town of Windsor
- County of Sonoma
- Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District
- Sonoma Clean Power
- Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District
- Sonoma Water

About the RCPA

The Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) leads a local government coalition to mobilize regional climate action in Sonoma County. RCPA is a special district governed by a twelve-member Board of Directors comprised of representatives from the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and Council Members from each of the nine cities – Cloverdale, Cotati, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Sonoma, and Windsor.

As a coordination agency for ten member jurisdictions and multiple partner agencies, the RCPA provides a forum for local elected officials to engage in dialogue on countywide issues and enables discussions among local and regional entities on a wide range of topics related to decarbonization, carbon sequestration, and building community resilience.

Table of Contents

Introduction

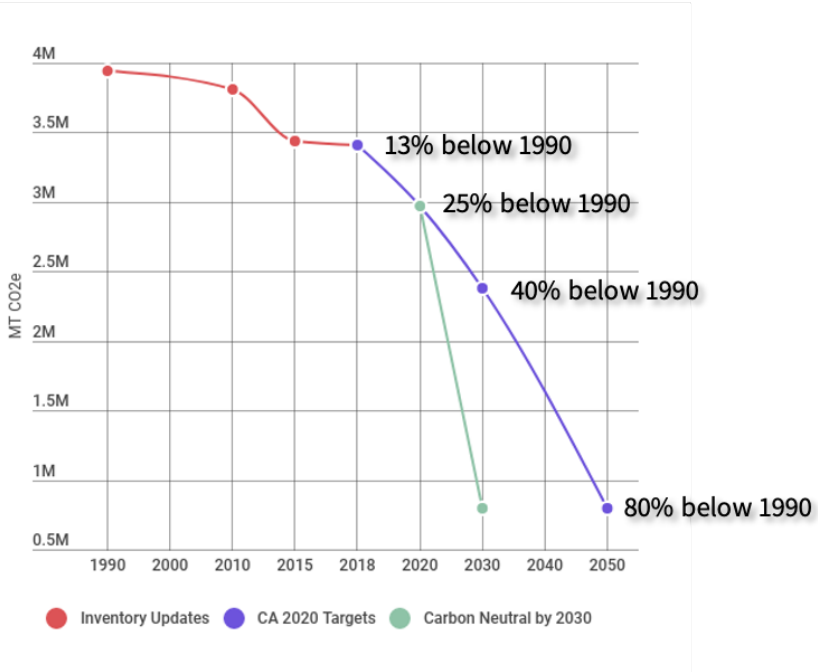
In September 2019, the Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) Board adopted a Climate Emergency Resolution outlining the agency's commitment to leading countywide efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change in the decade ahead. The resolution directed the RCPA to develop a new strategy, the Sonoma Climate Mobilization Strategy, to mobilize an emergency response commensurate with the scale of the climate crisis.

The Sonoma Climate Mobilization Strategy builds on the Climate Action 2020 and Beyond (CA 2020) plan published in 2016. The new strategy sets a goal of carbon neutrality by 2030, a more ambitious goal than the 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 established in CA 2020.

While most of our homes and businesses are now powered by 97 percent carbon-free electricity provided by Sonoma Clean Power (Sonoma Water met its carbon-free water goal in 2015 and Zero Waste Sonoma is actively working with local jurisdictions to reach zero waste), we still have a long way to go!

Our recent 2018 GHG Inventory Update[1] revealed that our countywide emissions were 13 percent below 1990 levels in 2018. We would need to decrease emissions by another 0.5 million metric tons CO_2 equivalent (MT CO_2e) in order to meet the 2020 goal of 25 percent below 1990 levels and 1.6 million MT CO_2e to meet the 2030 goal of 40 percent below 1990 levels (Figure 1).

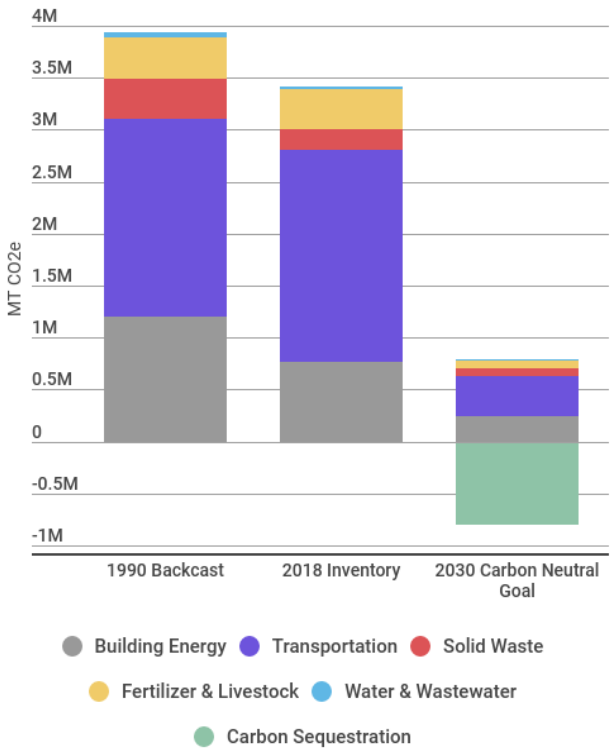
Figure 1 **GHG Emission Targets**



To meet the Sonoma Climate Mobilization goal of carbon neutrality by 2030, Sonoma County must reduce its GHG emissions by at least 80 percent below 1990 levels and achieve an increase in carbon sequestration that is large enough to remove the remaining CO_2 from the atmosphere. Figure 2 shows what an 80 percent reduction in emissions from each sector would look like and how much carbon sequestration would be needed to achieve carbon neutrality.

[1] https://rcpa.ca.gov/data-and-reports/sonoma-county-greenhouse-gas-inventory/

Figure 2 **Reduction Goals to Achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2030**



The Sonoma Climate Mobilization Strategy contains a ten-year policy package that outlines thirteen countywide strategies under local authority with the potential to significantly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increase carbon sequestration by 2030. These strategies have been developed by RCPA in collaboration with its members, partners, advisory committees, and local climate experts. The RCPA will support the policy package by coordinating with cities, County, and special districts to assist with policy development and implementation for those areas that provide the greatest impact to reducing emissions.

Goal

- Achieve carbon neutrality in Sonoma County no later than 2030.

Guiding Principles

- Prioritize high impact actions that are within local government control
- Prioritize equitable outcomes that improve quality of life for all, with a focus on those most impacted by climate change
- Connect community priorities to climate action, equity, and resilience
- Identify and advocate for the necessary regional and state policy solutions to enable Sonoma County to meet this goal
- Align with and support local jurisdictions in climate work
- Establish processes, metrics, and tools to track progress through an equity and climate lens

Overview of Strategies

The strategies in the policy package are organized into four initiatives:

- Decarbonization: Target existing sources of greenhouse gas emissions
- Carbon Sequestration: Significantly increase carbon stocks
- Resilience and Adaptation: Reduce risk and vulnerability; increase ability to recover and adapt
- Equity and Community Engagement: Support and enhance climate actions by engaging local communities, prioritizing those most impacted by climate change

Each initiative has multiple strategies designed to achieve significant GHG emissions reductions or increase carbon sequestration as shown in the table below.

Initiative	Sector	Strategy
Decarbonization	Building Energy	• 1. All-Electric Buildings Campaign • 2. Carbon-Free Electricity
	Transportation	• 3. Drive Less Sonoma County Campaign • 4. EV Access for All Partnership • 5. Sonoma County Vehicle Miles Traveled Mitigation Bank
	Solid Waste	• 6. Zero Waste by 2030
Sequestration		• 7. Protect Existing Carbon Stocks • 8. Increase Carbon Stocks • 9. Scale Up Infrastructure for Sequestration
Resilience and Adaptation		• 10. Energy Grid for the Future • 11. Climate Resilient Sonoma County
Equity and Community Engagement		• 12. Engage, Educate, Empower for Equitable Climate Action • 13. Equity and Climate in All Policies

A Note on Consumption-Based Emissions

The emission reduction goals shown in Figure 2 are based on RCPA's 2018 GHG Inventory Update. This inventory is activity-based, meaning that it does not include all human activities in Sonoma County that drive an increase or decrease in GHG emissions. Rather than trying to account for every source of emissions, RCPA publishes inventories to monitor progress on the largest emissions sources that can most directly be influenced by local government actions. The types of emissions, that are not accounted for in RCPA's GHG inventories, include the consumption of goods and services imported into Sonoma County, and air travel.

Based on data from a 2015 study by the Cool Climate Network[2], Sonoma County's total consumption-based emissions in 2015 were 7.2 million MT CO_2e – significantly higher than the approximately 3.4 million MT CO_2e activity-based emissions reported in the 2018 GHG inventory. There is some overlap in emissions accounted for in the two types of inventories. For example, the emissions from fossil fuel used to power our transportation and building sectors are included in both inventories.

While we all have a role to play in reducing emissions from our consumption of goods and services, the Sonoma Climate Mobilization focuses on high impact strategies within local government control. The strategies under the Equity and Community Engagement Initiative will help build support for and identify additional actions that we can take to reduce our consumption-based emissions.

[2] https://coolclimate.berkeley.edu/index

Strategies

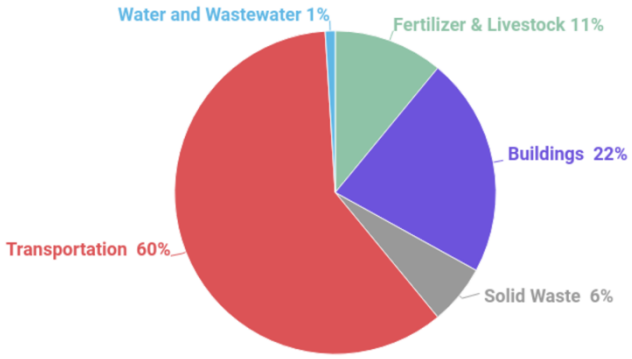
The Sonoma Climate Mobilization Strategy is intended to be a guiding document that describes recommended actions, co-benefits, possible implementation partners, and pillars for success for each of the thirteen strategies. This information will be used to develop implementation and funding plans for each strategy.

Decarbonization

Our world is still largely dependent on the burning of fossil fuels to power our buildings and transportation systems. From petroleum-fueled cars to natural gas stoves, we have relied on burning things to get energy from the beginning of human history. Decarbonization means turning a new page in our evolution, where we stop relying on fire and start using smarter, cleaner forms of energy.

Decarbonization means that we must rapidly transition away from all use of fossil fuels. Achieving this goal will require a careful reworking of many of our systems. The good news is that we have proven solutions to decarbonize most of the activities that produce the majority of our GHG emissions. The sources of Sonoma County's 2018 emissions are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 **GHG Emissions by Sector**



Buildings

Burning fossil fuels to power buildings contributed approximately 22 percent of Sonoma County's greenhouse gas emissions in 2018.[3] Sonoma County reduced emissions by 37 percent between 1990 and 2018, primarily due to improved energy efficiency in newer buildings and the implementation of Sonoma Clean Power. Now that Sonoma County's electricity supply has gotten cleaner, we must focus on reducing emissions from natural gas.

To significantly reduce emissions from buildings, Sonoma County must decarbonize its building energy use by transitioning from natural gas to clean electricity for space heating, water heating, and cooking. It must also achieve 100 percent carbon-free energy sooner than 2045, which is the existing requirement established by Senate Bill 100.

[3] RCPA 2018 GHG Inventory Report

1. All-Electric Buildings Campaign

Accelerate the electrification of existing buildings and electrify all new buildings.

Objectives:

- Develop a date certain, funded, phased retrofit requirement for existing buildings to transition to all electric:
    - Adopt a requirement to retrofit 25 percent of all residential and commercial buildings to enhance energy efficiency and convert to all electric by 2030 and the remaining 75 percent by 2050.
    - Adopt a requirement to retrofit all municipal buildings to enhance energy efficiency and convert to all electric by 2030.
- Require new buildings to be all electric:
    - Advocate for and work with state to accelerate electrification through California energy code updates in 2022 and 2025.
    - Ban natural gas and propane for all new construction in Sonoma County.
- Integrate equity into building electrification plans:
    - Require equity impact assessments of all electrification policies.
    - Assure funding for building electrification investments in disadvantaged communities.

For existing buildings, priority should be given to actions that increase energy efficiency by using technologies that require less energy (e.g., replacing incandescent/fluorescent light bulbs with LED's) and actions that result in energy conservation (e.g., installing light sensors for turning off lights when leaving a room). These actions reduce demand for electricity and will make it easier and more cost effective to achieve all-electric buildings.

Implementation of the All-Electric Buildings Campaign will require a combination of education, incentives, and new regulations. Jurisdictions are already working with Sonoma Clean Power, Healdsburg Electric, and PG&E to promote electrification. When it opens in 2021, Sonoma Clean Power's Advanced Energy Center will provide additional educational and financial resources for local residents to save energy and convert to all-electric homes.

The Sonoma County Energy Independence Program (SCEIP) provides financing for residential energy efficiency, renewable energy, and water conservation upgrades. The Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) and Sonoma Clean Power are providing financial incentives for energy retrofits and the purchase and installation of electric appliances. These programs should continue and expand to reach more renters, homeowners, and property owners.

In advance of the next California energy code updates, local jurisdictions should pursue reach codes to support a more rapid transition to all-electric homes. Other policy tools such as point of sale or remodel ordinances will be required to accelerate the retrofitting of existing buildings. The Clean Building Compass, a new resource funded by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, is an online database of information and model policies on building electrification that will be used to support this strategy.

To date, early adopters of renewable energy and building retrofits have been primarily higher-income homeowners and property owners who can afford to make these changes. We must take equity into consideration as we plan and implement the All-Electric Buildings Campaign to facilitate a just transition from fossil fuels to renewables for all Sonoma County residents. The campaign should

evaluate all policies through an equity lens and use this information to ensure disadvantaged communities benefit from the new policies. The Building Electrification Equity Project recently published a report[4] with recommendations that could be implemented in Sonoma County:

- Provide funding for community-based organizations to support effective outreach to disadvantaged communities.
- Build requirements for diversity, training, pre-apprenticeship, and apprenticeship actions and funding into building electrification policies.
- Increase capacity of minority and women owned firms to perform energy retrofits and all-electric upgrades.
- Fund HVAC training for workers from disadvantaged communities.
- Enact policies to support a just transition from gas to electric, ensuring the cost burden of stranded gas assets is not placed on those who can least afford to make the switch to all electric.

Co-benefits:

- Improvements in indoor air quality and health; green job creation

Potential Implementation Partners:

- RCPA, County of Sonoma Energy and Sustainability Division, Sonoma Clean Power, Healdsburg Electric, PG&E, BayREN, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, cities/county

Pillars for Success:

- Resources to subsidize, incentivize, and manage implementation.
- Sufficient supply of new appliances, equipment, materials, and a trained workforce capable of implementing the retrofits in the next ten years.
- Updates to California Energy Code support strategy.
- Additional regulatory changes and funding to accelerate retrofitting of existing buildings.
- Strong community-wide awareness and support for building decarbonization.

2. Carbon-Free Electricity

Accelerate the transition to 100 percent carbon-free electricity.

Objectives:

- Promote the use of 100 percent renewable and/or carbon-free energy, such as Sonoma Clean Power Evergreen or City of Healdsburg Green Rate, in residential and commercial buildings.
- For municipal buildings, achieve 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2030 through a combination of Evergreen, City of Healdsburg Green Rate, and onsite solar plus battery storage.
- Develop a campaign using effective, research-based incentives to increase installations of solar plus battery storage in residences of all income groups.
- Develop a campaign to increase the use of demand response using capable technologies (e.g., appliances, cars, batteries).

[4] The Building Electrification Equity Project. (2020). Emerald Cities Collaborative. https://nmcdn.io/e186d21f8c7946a19faed23c3da2f0da/9bb11a106d6f43d5ae8118a05a071e96/files/BEE_Report_Final.pdf

Sonoma County has already achieved significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions through the implementation of Sonoma Clean Power, Healdsburg Electric's Green Rate, and the increasing renewable content in PG&E's electricity supply. Moving to 100 percent renewable and/or carbon-free electricity will require a combination of actions including the use of on-site solar with battery storage.

Co-benefits:

- Increased resilience from power outages through combination of solar plus battery storage; potential green job creation

Potential Implementation Partners:

- RCPA, County of Sonoma Energy and Sustainability Division, Sonoma Clean Power, Healdsburg Electric, PG&E, cities/county, installers/contractors

Pillars for Success:

- Availability of local renewable sources
- Trained contractor workforce for installations
- Load shifting from evening hours to daytime using appliances, HVAC, Sonoma Clean Power GridSavvy, etc.

Transportation

Emissions from the burning of fossil fuels to power Sonoma County's transportation system contributed approximately 60 percent of its total greenhouse gas emissions in 2018. Transportation emissions have increased from 1.9 million metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent ($MTCO_2e$) in 1990 to over 2 million $MTCO_2e$ in 2018, an increase of 7 percent.

Almost 93 percent of the 2018 transportation sector emissions were from on-road transportation (cars, motorcycles, trucks, and buses). The majority of the remaining 7 percent consisted of emissions from off-road equipment such as construction and farm equipment. Less than 1 percent of total emissions were from the SMART commuter rail system which began service in 2017.

Between the greenhouse gas inventory base year of 1990 and the 2018 inventory, total county population increased by 29 percent and vehicle miles traveled per capita increased 18 percent. During the same time period, per capita greenhouse gas emissions from on-road transportation decreased by approximately 14 percent. The decrease in emissions is attributed to improvements in vehicle fuel efficiency and a shift toward hybrid, plug-in hybrid, and battery electric vehicles.

The strategies in this section focus on increasing transportation options, reducing vehicle miles traveled, and shifting from fossil fuels to electricity.

3. Drive Less Sonoma County Campaign

Make it easier to get around Sonoma County without a car.

Objectives:

- Implement network of low-stress bike and pedestrian facilities (e.g., pathways, bike lanes, sidewalks) connecting to major bus and rail transit hubs, schools, employment centers, medical facilities, and other key destinations as identified in the SCTA Travel Behavior Study.
- Implement recommendations from Vision Zero Action Plan to make walking and biking safer.
- Develop a "next generation" transit system for Sonoma County that is an attractive and viable option to driving alone and provides equitable mobility for all.

- Implement strategies from the SCTA Comprehensive Transportation Plan[5] that reduce emissions (e.g., bikeshare, expand employer commute programs, unbundle parking from residential and commercial leases).

The Drive Less Sonoma County Campaign is a set of actions aimed at making it easier to get around Sonoma County without a car. During the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic, the county experienced a huge rise in bicycling as residents sought virus-free alternatives to mass transit. This campaign will explore how these new active-mobility habits can continue and make a lasting, permanent reduction in drive-alone trips.

The Drive Less campaign will also support a "next generation" transit system for Sonoma County that is an attractive and viable option to driving alone and provides equitable mobility for all. Few people only use one form of transportation, so creating a network of decarbonized options is essential for success.

The objectives in this campaign are designed to achieve a significant reduction in vehicle miles traveled by shifting from the use of single occupant vehicles to walking, biking, transit, and shared vehicles. The "next generation" transit system objective includes the electrification of the transit fleet. Local bus transit operators have begun upgrading their fleets to electric to comply with the Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) regulation which requires agencies to gradually transition to 100 percent zero emission bus fleets by 2040.[6]

Co-benefits:

- Increased resilience; improved air quality; improved public safety and health; potential green job creation; increased mobility

Potential Implementation Partners:

- SCTA, Transit Agencies, Sonoma Clean Power, MTC, cities/county, Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition, independent bicycle industry

Pillars for Success:

- Sonoma County's existing land use patterns and geography make it more challenging to access jobs, schools, recreation, and services without a car. SCTA's recent travel behavior study revealed that 60 percent of trips were less than 5 miles in length, which indicates an opportunity to reduce driving through improvements in infrastructure and transit.[7]
- To address the land use challenges, the cities and County will need to continue to focus development near transit and in Priority Development Areas. For example, Santa Rosa's recent update to its Downtown Station Area Plan was designed to facilitate more development in its downtown core.

[5] https://scta.ca.gov/planning/comprehensive-transportation-plan/
[6] https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/innovative-clean-transit
[7] https://scta.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Sonoma_TBS_2-7-2020_web.pdf

4. EV Access for All Partnership

Accelerate the transition to 100 percent electric vehicles (EVs) for all transportation needs not otherwise met by biking or walking.

Objectives:

- Work with regional partners and local businesses to develop over 10,000 public and workplace charging stations in Sonoma County by 2027.
- Develop a package of local ordinances and other actions to address remaining permitting barriers for installing charging equipment, while also limiting permitting of new fossil fuel infrastructure.
- Create an accessible and affordable EV concierge service to connect low-income residents, students, and seniors with existing incentives, financing and education initiatives.
- Support the use of electric bicycles and other lightweight electric utility vehicles through an awareness campaign and incentives.
- Support the use of heavy-duty EVs, such as public transit buses, school buses, and refuse collection trucks through infrastructure planning at central yards and support for state and federal incentive applications.

While transportation accounts for 60 percent of Sonoma County emissions, electric vehicles using renewable power can nearly eliminate the pollution associated with driving. The EV Access for All Partnership would use technologies that are commercially viable and build on existing infrastructure needed to use electricity as a transportation fuel.

The Partnership proposes investments in programs to expand the availability of charging, make EVs accessible and affordable for more Sonoma County residents, expand the use of electric bikes, and accelerate the adoption of EVs in heavy-duty applications. It will support implementation of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District 2021 Charge! and Clean Cars for All programs. Electric bikes and other lightweight electric utility vehicles, like electric cargo bikes, could provide viable alternatives to car ownership – especially if incentives are focused on low-income residents, students, and seniors.

Co-benefits:

- Reduced ground-level pollution; reduced levels of surplus renewable energy; increased investment from EV charging networks; reduced risk from stranded assets by preventing additional fossil fuel infrastructure; localized redirection of money spent on fueling; reduced soil and groundwater contamination; and reliable zero-emission transportation for frontline communities.

Potential implementation partners:

- RCPA, Sonoma County Regional Parks, Permit Sonoma, local permitting offices, Sonoma Clean Power, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, low-income housing managers, transit agencies, waste haulers, school districts, carsharing organizations.

Pillars for success:

- Governor Newsom's Executive Order requiring 100 percent of all new in-state sales of cars and light trucks to be zero-emissions vehicles by 2035.
- California Air Resources Board regulations mandating that all operations of medium and heavy-duty vehicles be 100 percent zero emission by 2045.

- Ongoing incentives from the federal, state and regional level to install workplace and public EV charging stations and retire fossil fuel vehicles.
- Ongoing reductions in the cost of vehicles due to new business models and advancements in manufacturing.

5. Sonoma County Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT) Bank

Develop new funding sources for transportation projects that reduce VMT.

Objective:

- Develop a VMT mitigation banking structure for new development to fund transportation demand management (TDM) and VMT reducing projects and programs to achieve countywide VMT reduction goals as defined in the SCTA Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) and other policies.

Senate Bill 743 (Steinberg, 2013) reformed the process for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review of transportation impacts to align with greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals via VMT analysis. Lead agencies who are making the transition from level of service (LOS) analysis to VMT, to assess impacts and project developers, now must reduce vehicle miles traveled to mitigate significant transportation impacts.

One approach to address mitigation is a VMT-based transportation impact fee. Fee programs can be time consuming to develop, monitor, and maintain but are recognized as an acceptable form of CEQA mitigation if they can demonstrate that the mitigation projects will be fully funded and implemented.

Another approach is the creation of mitigation "banks" or "exchanges." Under the banking approach a developer commits funds instead of undertaking specific on-site mitigation projects, and then a local or regional authority could aggregate these funds and deploy them to top-priority mitigation projects throughout the jurisdiction. Similarly, in a mitigation exchange, developers would be permitted to select from a list of pre-approved mitigation projects throughout the jurisdiction (or propose their own), without needing to mitigate their transportation impacts on-site. Both models can be applied at a city, county, regional, and potentially state scale.

Programs can pool development mitigation contributions to pay for larger and more effective VMT reduction strategies that are not be feasible for individual projects. The concept of a programmatic approach to impact mitigation has been used for other technical subjects including transportation, air quality, greenhouse gases, and habitat.

Like all mitigation, substantial evidence would be required to show that the projects covered by the bank would achieve expected VMT reductions, with some form of monitoring required. The verification of how much VMT reduction is associated with each dollar or credit may be challenging to determine.

A key unknown with banking or exchanges is the time period for VMT reduction or how many years of VMT reduction is required to declare a VMT impact less than significant.

This strategy supports the other transportation strategies in the Sonoma Climate Mobilization by providing a new funding source for larger infrastructure projects that would not be funded by any single development project.

Co-benefits:

- Simplifies mitigation process for cities and developers; provides funding for projects with greater GHG reduction potential.

Potential implementation partners:

- SCTA, MTC, cities/county

Pillars for success:

- Effective method for determining expected VMT reductions.
- Process in place to prioritize projects for funding based on VMT and GHG impact.

Waste

The emissions resulting from the disposal of solid waste produced in Sonoma County were approximately 6 percent of total emissions in 2018. While this is a much smaller percentage of Sonoma County's emissions, solid waste highlights another aspect of Sonoma County's carbon footprint which is the impact of its consumption of goods and services on emissions.

To achieve our goal of zero waste and reduce emissions related to the upstream and downstream impacts of our purchases, we must shift to more sustainable consumption practices such as reducing what we consume, reusing what we can, and recycling or composting everything else to achieve 100 percent diversion from the landfill.

6. Zero Waste by 2030

Develop policies, programs, and education campaigns to eliminate waste sent to landfills.

Objectives:

- Develop a program to achieve zero organics to landfill by 2030.
- Adopt a countywide construction and demolition ordinance that requires contractors to meet recycle goals beyond Cal Green, including a requirement for tracking and reporting construction waste disposal.
- Launch a community-wide zero waste campaign with a focus on reuse and reduced consumption.

Zero Waste Sonoma is leading efforts in Sonoma County to achieve zero waste by 2030. The regional agency has developed a model zero waste resolution and is working with local jurisdictions to support its adoption. To date, six of the ten jurisdictions have adopted the resolution.

Co-benefits:

- Reduction in consumption based GHG emissions

Potential implementation partners:

- Zero Waste Sonoma, cities/county

Pillars for success:

- Strong community-wide awareness and support to reuse, reduce, and recycle.

Sequestration

Carbon sequestration is a critical part of achieving the Sonoma Climate Mobilization goal of carbon neutral by 2030. There are existing efforts on rural lands to increase sequestration, and the potential exists to increase sequestration in the urban parts of the county as well. Sonoma County's forestlands and wetlands, especially the Baylands, provide additional capacity to sequester carbon.

Sonoma County can achieve carbon neutrality by fully engaging its farmers and ranchers and their working farms and ranches through programs to increase carbon sequestration in soils and plants. If Sonoma County reduced its emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, the remaining carbon would need to be sequestered in order to achieve carbon neutrality. Terrestrial sequestration is ultimately the best available strategy to move beyond carbon neutrality to net drawdown of CO_2, while offering many ecosystem and agricultural production co-benefits.

7. Protect Existing Carbon Stocks

Maintain the carbon that is currently held in soil and plants.

Objectives:

- Support the implementation of forest management practices that protect existing carbon stocks by reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire, while sequestering more carbon by growing large, mature trees and moving surplus biomass to the soil carbon pool via mulching in place, prescribed fire, conservation burns and off site uses, including compost and mulch production.
- Work with the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District on strategic land protection and stewardship actions that increase carbon sequestration and minimize conversion to land uses that have a lower capacity to sequester carbon.
- Work with Permit Sonoma to implement existing and develop new land use policies (e.g., Sonoma County General Plan, Williamson Act) that result in measurable carbon sequestration.
- Implement county-wide fire safe landscape practices, tree care and protection and compost/mulch application

In 2016, the Climate Action Through Conservation (CATC) initiative[8] completed a carbon inventory for Sonoma County to estimate the amount of carbon sequestered in different land-cover classes (e.g., agriculture, grassland, shrubland, forest). The inventory found that from 1990 to 2010, carbon sequestration increased in the county by more than 15 million $MTCO_2e$. The majority of this increase was attributed to the expansion of forest cover in the county. The results highlighted the importance of management practices that promote healthy forests and minimize the risk of carbon loss through conversion to other uses or catastrophic wildfires such as those that swept through Sonoma County in 2017, 2019, and 2020.

Co-Benefits:

- Increased soil water holding capacity; increased soil water infiltration rates; increased groundwater recharge; reduced fertilizer and pesticide use; increased productivity; increased biodiversity; increased resilience to extreme weather events; job creation

[8] https://www.sonomaopenspace.org/projects/catc/

Potential Implementation Partners:

- Forest Management Practices - Resource Conservation Districts, CalFire, NRCS, UC Cooperative Extension, Rebuild North Bay Foundation, consulting foresters, Good Fire Alliance, LandPaths, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, Sonoma County Regional Parks, Sonoma Land Trust, Audubon Canyon Ranch, private conservation NGOs, public and individual landowners
- Land Conservation Work - Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, Permit Sonoma, cities, Sonoma Land Trust, Bodega Land Trust, Greenbelt Alliance, American Farmland Trust, Community Alliance for Family Farmers, Tribes, individual landowners
- Fire Safer Landscape Practices – Permit Sonoma, Fire Safe Sonoma, Resilient Landscapes Coalition, Renewable Sonoma, local fire safe councils, individual landowners

8. Increase Carbon Stocks

Capture more carbon in soils and plants

Objectives:

- Support local agricultural producers to plan, implement, and scale carbon sequestration.
- Increase our urban forest cover starting with communities impacted by recent fires and disadvantaged communities.
- Implement regenerative land management practices at the city scale - practice drawdown, reduce emissions and improve watershed and human health.

Sonoma County is uniquely positioned to lead on carbon farming and sequestration and the development of a model that can be replicated throughout the state and nationwide. Sonoma County has a strong set of partners, anchored by the Resource Conservation Districts (RCD), UC Cooperative Extension, the Carbon Cycle Institute, and USDA-NRCS, who have the experience and long-term working partnerships with farmers and ranchers implementing conservation projects and carbon farming.

Carbon farming is good for the health and resilience of the agricultural industry in Sonoma County, and its farmers and ranchers are already working with the RCDs to create and implement Carbon Farm Plans. While there are State and Federal funding resources for carbon farming to leverage, local matching funds are needed to bring these funds to Sonoma County and to scale the work.

Farmers and ranchers engaged in carbon farming can gain a marketing benefit by selling their carbon farming story to consumers (e.g., Straus Family Creamery and Organic Valley). Companies (such as North Face, Patagonia, Coyuchi) are willing to pay a premium for climate-beneficial food and fiber that also is healthy for regional ecologies and the planet. Farmers and ranchers are seeing increased soil fertility and on-farm production, including increased forage production. Carbon farming can decrease irrigation needs and thus improve drought resilience while reducing demand on limited ground and surface water resources.

Many carbon farming practices have benefits to water quality and quantity, and to wildlife habitat – such as hedgerows and riparian restoration projects supporting pollinators, fish, birds, and other wildlife. Carbon farmers and ranchers see themselves, and are recognized by their community, as part of the solution to climate change and its catastrophic consequences. Many farms and ranches include forests and woodlands. Managing these resources for climate change and drought resilience through carbon farming approaches can reduce vulnerability to wildfire.

Co-Benefits:

- Increased water holding capacity; increased soil water infiltration rates; increased groundwater recharge; reduced fertilizer and pesticide use; increased productivity; increased biodiversity; increased resilience to extreme weather events; reduced heat island effect; reduced summer cooling required; job creation

Potential Implementation Partners:

- Support local agricultural producers: Resource Conservation Districts (lead), UC Cooperative Extension, Carbon Cycle Institute, USDA-NRCS, Sonoma County Department of Agriculture, Community Alliance with Family Farmers, Sonoma County Farm Bureau, Sonoma County Winegrowers, farmers and ranchers
- Increase urban forest: Cities, County; North Bay Conservation Corps (NBCC), UC Cooperative Extension
- Implement regenerative land management practices: Cities, Safe Ag Safe Schools (SASS) coalition, Carbon Cycle Institute, ReScape and California Landscape Contractors Association (CLCA), Russian River Watershed Association

9. Scale Up the Infrastructure for Sequestration

Build the physical, social, and economic capacity for successful carbon sequestration.

Objectives:

- Create a "sequester local" program to help Sonoma County businesses reinvest carbon-offset dollars within the community.
- Secure permanent Resource Conservation District funding for scaling carbon farming, starting with $2 million and increasing to $20 million per year within the next ten years.
- Scale up the infrastructure necessary to fully implement Carbon Farm Plans.
- Develop a comprehensive carbon gardening residential education campaign.
- Develop a carbon sequestration training for landscape professionals, County and City parks and recreation.
- Use policies, civic incentives, and educational efforts, taking action and building civic engagement towards a larger vision.

In order to implement the sequestration strategies designed to maintain and increase carbon stocks, significant investments in Sonoma County's physical, social, and economic capacity are needed. Funding and resources such as adequate supply of plants and compost must be secured to significantly scale up carbon farming.

To build the social capital and community support for sequestration, this strategy includes an objective to engage community members in programs that increase carbon sequestration in urban spaces.

In an urban context, cities can implement practices to sequester carbon such as using compost and mulch on city owned land and encouraging residents to engage proactively with the carbon cycle by implementing carbon gardens in their yards and neighborhoods. Residents can be encouraged to reduce food waste sent to landfills through food rescue programs, backyard and small community composting projects as well as placing organics in the green can.

Increasing awareness of carbon sequestration in the urban community can increase markets for carbon farmed agricultural products while helping to build local food security and climate resilience.

Focusing on a multi-benefit approach in urban areas that includes water conservation, stormwater retention, and watershed health will provide additional funding sources through existing municipal programs. Finally, an urban sequestration strategy provides an opportunity to build the civic engagement needed for a bold climate vision.

Co-Benefits:

- Increased community support for carbon sequestration; increased soil water holding capacity; increased soil water infiltration rates; increased groundwater recharge; reduced fertilizer and pesticide use; increased productivity; increased biodiversity; increased resilience to extreme weather events; job creation

Potential Implementation Partners:

- Sequester local program: REcology, Zero Foodprint, Zero Waste Sonoma, local businesses
- Secure permanent RCD funding: Resource Conservation Districts, Zero Foodprint, REcology, State of California
- Scale up the infrastructure for carbon farming: The Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship, County nursery, Milo Baker Chapter of the California Native Plant Society, North Bay Conservation Corps, Point Blue Conservation (STRAW program), Zero Waste Sonoma, Laguna Foundation, Petaluma Wetlands Alliance
- Carbon gardening residential education program: Zero Waste Sonoma, Daily Acts, Sonoma County Master Gardeners, other community-based organizations
- Carbon sequestration training: Rescape and California Landscape Contractors Association CLC CLA; County and City parks and recreation depts., Russian River Watershed Association, Green Garden Group, Daily Acts, Sonoma County Master Gardeners
- Civic engagement: Daily Acts, RCPA, Cities, Los Cien, North Bay Organizing Project, Latino Service Providers, La Plaza, Sunrise Movement, Landpaths, other community-based organizations

Pillars for Success for all Sequestration Strategies:

- Sustained leadership and commitment from the County to engage and incentivize the agricultural and urban community in carbon farming/urban sequestration.
- Focused funding and incentives.
- More technical service providers who understand conservation planning, agriculture and horticulture, and carbon cycling and climate science
- A scaled labor force to work with our carbon farmers to plan, implement, and maintain climate-beneficial projects.
- Expanded infrastructure focused on tools and materials such as local nurseries; organic waste collection and processing; and technical assistance and regulatory support for on farm composting.
- Community engagement efforts that raise awareness about the benefits of carbon farming and urban sequestration and regularly update the community on progress.
- An integrated approach to outreach and education on carbon farming and gardening programs and concepts that maximizes existing programming and increases funding opportunities.

Resilience and Adaptation

In April 2016, the North Bay Climate Adaptation Initiative (NBCAI) released *A Roadmap for Climate Resilience in Sonoma County*. The roadmap provides a framework and recommendations for how Sonoma County should approach climate resilience.[9] The roadmap defines a set of nine climate resilience goals that are designed to address extreme heat, drought, wildfires, fewer freezing nights, extreme floods, higher sea level, and high storm surges. Each goal has a set of priority actions to address the climate hazards related to the goal.

Since the roadmap was published, Sonoma County has experienced more frequent and severe climate hazards including devastating Russian River floods in 2019 and extreme wildfires in 2017, 2019, and 2020. Given current and forecasted climate conditions, wildfires will continue to be a significant risk for Sonoma County. Buildings, energy systems, and transportation systems must become more resilient to wildfires. Power shut offs as a wildfire prevention strategy will continue to pose threats to human health and safety if we do not create a more resilient energy grid. As we shift away from fossil fuel use, we will become more dependent on electricity to power our buildings and transportation systems. The strategies in this section are designed to build on existing resilience and adaptation efforts underway or planned in the county.

10. Energy Grid for the Future

Increase energy grid resilience and prepare for electrification of buildings and transportation systems.

Objectives:

- Develop both community and municipal microgrids, focusing on critical infrastructure and vulnerable populations first.
- Advocate for the creation of a reliable, robust energy grid that will support increased loads from electrification and not be disrupted by wildfires and other climate related risks.

There is growing interest in Sonoma County in utilizing microgrids to build resiliency into our energy grid. Stone Edge Farm has a fully operational microgrid and the Santa Rosa Junior College is implementing a microgrid demonstration project. WeAct, a group of local citizens in Windsor, recently prepared a report exploring the feasibility of building and operating “clean microgrids” in Windsor to decentralize energy generation and storage and provide backup power during emergencies. The County of Sonoma has included support for microgrids as part of its draft five-year strategic plan. The Redwood Coast Municipal Airport microgrid project in Mendocino County and Santa Barbara's school district microgrids are examples of replicable models in other parts of California.

In addition to microgrids, the solar plus battery backup objective defined earlier under the All-Electric Buildings Campaign strategy also contributes to more reliable power for those that are able to implement this solution. Sonoma Clean Power is conducting a feasibility study on the installation of battery backup systems for school sites that already have solar power. Other existing residential, commercial and municipal buildings should consider this strategy as a way of reducing their vulnerability to power outages and helping to balance supply and demand on the grid.[10]

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[9] https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=bm9ydGhiYXljbGltYXRlLm9yZ3x3d3d8Z3g6NGZkMTIyMGNjOGY1ODIwMQ

[10] https://www.energy.gov/eere/articles/confronting-duck-curve-how-address-over-generation-solar-energy

The combination of increased threats to energy grid stability from wildfires and the increased loads from electrification of building and transportation systems require a transformation of our energy grid to increase capacity and reliability. While not under local control, Sonoma County should advocate for policy and funding solutions at the state level to transition to a future energy grid that supports our resilience and decarbonization goals.

Co-benefits:

- Energy supply that is not disrupted by wildfires and other climate hazards; increased community resilience during emergencies.

Potential Implementation Partners:

- County of Sonoma Energy and Sustainability Division, Sonoma Clean Power, PG&E, City of Healdsburg Electric Utility, cities/county, County of Sonoma Office of Recovery and Resiliency, installers/contractors.

Pillars for Success:

- Regulatory and Power Market changes to support microgrids
- Increased incentives for solar + battery solutions for critical infrastructure and vulnerable populations
- Land use policies that support installation of microgrid infrastructure

11. Climate Resilient Sonoma County

Address the economic, social, and environmental impacts of future wildfires, floods, extreme heat, drought, sea level rise, and other climate change risks.

Objectives:

- Support launch of a local vegetation/forest management and fire prevention corps.
- Support inclusion of climate adaptation and resiliency strategies in safety elements of local general plans.
- Implement priority recommendations from the Urban Land Institute Resilience Advisory Services Panel, which will assess land use, development, and local energy grid strategies in relation to community preparedness and wildfire and economic resilience.

The increasing frequency and severity of wildfires in the region has increased interest in land and forest management practices to prevent or minimize the impact of future wildfires. The launch of a local vegetation/forest management and fire prevention corps would support a more proactive approach and be a good source of local jobs.

Under Senate Bill 379, cities and the County are required to include climate adaptation and resilience in the safety elements of their general plans during the next revision to their general plans or local hazard mitigation plans.

With support from the Kresge Foundation, RCPA, the City of Santa Rosa, and the County of Sonoma engaged with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) in 2019 to assemble a Sonoma County Resilience Advisory Services Panel. The purpose of the advisory services panel is to assess land use, development, and local energy grid strategies in relation to community preparedness and wildfire and economic resilience. The advisory services panel was scheduled to meet in March 2020 but was postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19.

Co-benefits:

- Job creation; increased energy grid resilience; reduced fire risk; fewer economic disruptions

Potential Implementation Partners:

- RCPA, Urban Land Institute, Pepperwood Preserve, Sonoma Ecology Center, Fire departments, County of Sonoma Office of Emergency Management, County of Sonoma Office of Recovery and Resiliency, Sonoma Clean Power, cities/county

Pillars for Success:

- Ability to effectively conduct ULI Resilience Advisory Services Panel remotely or using a hybrid model.
- Funding for launch of local vegetation/forest management and fire prevention corps.
- Coordination with sequestration initiatives to leverage resources and approaches.

Equity and Community Engagement

Too often the members of our community who are most impacted by the effects of climate change are not involved in creating solutions to issues that impact their lives. When designed with equitable outcomes as a priority, the strategies in the Sonoma Climate Mobilization have the potential to significantly improve the quality of life for all members of our community through increased accessibility to jobs and services; improved indoor and outdoor air quality; safer and more comfortable homes; and other co-benefits from the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Current solutions may be out of reach to our most vulnerable communities for many reasons including cost, accessibility, and cultural factors. The purpose of the strategies in this section is to increase civic engagement in the development of the Sonoma Climate Mobilization strategies, resulting in equitable outcomes that improve quality of life for all residents in Sonoma County.

12. Engage, Educate, Empower for Equitable Climate Action

Coordinate local leaders and develop a campaign to engage vulnerable residents and key stakeholders in the Sonoma Climate Mobilization.

Objectives:

- Convene a Sonoma Climate Leadership Council with diverse representation from a wide range of stakeholders, representing various communities and sectors, to guide the development and implementation of the Sonoma Climate Mobilization campaign.
- Develop a strategic engagement, education and empowerment campaign to listen to the needs of vulnerable communities and stakeholders, hold discussions on available climate solutions, and collaborate with strategic partners who can help advance implementation by aligning climate solutions with pressing community needs.
- Partner with community-based organizations to support the engagement, education, and empowerment campaign, with a focus on underrepresented communities and those disproportionately affected by climate change.
- Work with the Sonoma Climate Leadership Council and community partners to analyze input given during the community listening sessions and create criteria to evaluate policy and investment prioritization decisions in order to support and empower those most vulnerable during implementation.

Over the next ten years, Sonoma County needs to make significant changes in all aspects of how we live – our transportation systems, homes, food, and consumption of goods and services. These changes will only be possible when residents understand the magnitude of the climate crisis, recognize they can play a role, and have the means to make the changes necessary in their own lives.

Community members representing our entire community, especially those disproportionately impacted by climate change, must be involved in the design and implementation of the local policies and programs that will be developed as part of the Sonoma Climate Mobilization Strategy.

Co-benefits:

- Increased awareness and support for climate strategies; more creative and effective solutions to climate challenges

Potential Implementation Partners:

- RCPA, Sonoma County Office of Equity, cities/county, local businesses, Sonoma State University, Santa Rosa Junior College, neighborhood groups, schools, HOA's, local community-based organizations, especially those representing Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other communities of color

Pillars for Success:

- Funding to support participation by community-based organizations.
- Selection of a backbone organization to support the Sonoma Climate Leadership Council (e.g., meeting facilitation, project management, and communication planning).

13. Equity and Climate in All Policies

Develop processes and tools to support the inclusion of equity and climate in all policies.

The purpose of this strategy is to integrate equity and climate action into all local government policies and programs. Rather than treating equity and climate as separate subjects, the strategy will create and implement new tools and processes that facilitate the consideration of equity and climate in every decision made by local government. Our focus is on equitably addressing climate change, and to actualize these goals, we recognize the need to support the creation of dignified, local, well-paying jobs that advance decarbonization, sequestration, and adaptation efforts.

Objectives:

- Research national models of equity impact assessments and how they have been applied to the evaluation of proposed climate policies and programs for their impacts on disadvantaged communities.
- Work with community-based organizations and local jurisdictions to develop and implement an equity impact assessment process and tools to understand impacts of proposed climate policies and programs on disadvantaged communities.
- Collectively develop a checklist with specific criteria and requirements for staff reports that require local Councils and Boards to consider how each policy and planning decision will or will not advance climate goals of decarbonization, carbon sequestration, resilience and adaptation, and equity.
- Leveraging existing indicators, develop a Sonoma County Climate Resilience Index to measure equity, including local "green" job creation, and climate impacts and track progress over time.

Disadvantaged communities will continue to experience disproportionately negative impacts from climate change unless steps are taken to address these impacts. Other cities have developed successful models to integrate equity into their climate action planning processes. The City of Oakland recently released its Equitable Climate Action Plan (ECAP). Its plan included a Racial Equity Impact Assessment and Implementation Guide which provides recommendations and best practices to support city staff in maximizing equity throughout the implementation of the ECAP.

The City of Seattle uses a Racial Equity Toolkit to address the impacts on racial equity in its policies, initiatives, programs, and budget issues. Through its membership in the Urban Sustainability Directors Network, RCPA has access to additional resources to support the development of an equity impact assessment process for the Sonoma Climate Mobilization.

Sonoma County is fortunate to have numerous community-based organizations representing the diversity of our community. These organizations will play a key role in developing the equity and climate assessment tools.

Co-Benefits:

- Equity is addressed as part of all climate solutions; integration of equity and climate into policies saves time for local government staff; access to benefits available for all residents

Potential Implementation Partners:

- RCPA, Sonoma County Office of Equity, Government Alliance on Race and Equity, cities/county, local community-based organizations

Pillars for Success:

- Funding to support community-based organizations to participate in process and tool development.
- Strong partnership with RCPA members and partners to develop effective equity and climate assessment tools and processes.

Implementation Recommendations

RCPA has developed the Sonoma Climate Mobilization Strategy to provide a framework for Sonoma County to achieve the ambitious goal of carbon neutral by 2030. While RCPA has a key role to play in coordinating implementation of the strategy, success in achieving our goal will require a collaborative, community-wide mobilization of resources across all sectors – local government, community-based organizations and nonprofits, business, labor, educational institutions, and community members.

Successful implementation of the Sonoma Climate Mobilization Strategy will require close coordination and alignment with RCPA's members and partner agencies. The cities of Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, and Petaluma are in the process of updating their General Plans and will include sections on climate action. The County of Sonoma is developing a new strategic plan that includes Climate Action and Resiliency as one of its five strategic pillars. The County will also be updating its General Plan and Local Coastal Plan in the next few years.

Sonoma Clean Power's Programs Division has developed a Strategic Action Plan that defines program strategies with supporting immediate, near-term, and long-term actions. At a regional level, the RCPA

is assisting the Bay Area Air Quality Management District with the implementation of its 2017 Clean Air Plan, which aligns well with the Sonoma Climate Mobilization strategies.

In early 2021, RCPA will convene representatives from various communities and sectors to launch the Sonoma Climate Leadership Council. More detailed implementation plans and funding options for each strategy will be developed in 2021. A high-level timeline is shown below.

2021	2022-2025	2025-2030
● Convene Sonoma Climate Leadership Council ● Create Sonoma Climate Mobilization Implementation and Funding Plan ● Identify funding sources ● Implement strategic engagement, education and empowerment campaign	● Implement Sonoma County Climate Resilience Index ● Secure funding ● Implement strategies ● Monitor progress** and adjust plans as needed	● Secure funding ● Implement strategies ● Monitor progress** and adjust plans as needed
***Metrics:* ● *RCPA GHG Inventory Updates* ● *Climate Resilience Index* ● *Implementation plan progress updates*		

Conclusion

In order to achieve the goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030, Sonoma County will need to build on its previous successes and significantly accelerate and scale up its climate action. The Sonoma Climate Mobilization Strategy defines the high impact strategies that are necessary to achieve carbon neutrality. Many of the technologies and solutions needed to achieve carbon neutrality are known. The challenge is to secure the necessary resources and engage our entire community in the transition from fossil fuels to a clean energy future and to implement those strategies that sequester greenhouse gases.

Success in achieving our goal is also dependent on support from the state and federal government in the form of new climate legislation and funding to implement strategies like the All-Electric Buildings Campaign and EV Access for All Partnership. The Sonoma Climate Mobilization Strategy will be used to develop and coordinate Sonoma County's response to the climate emergency and track our progress toward achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.